

Mr. Powell:

I cannot express the incredible sadness that the thought of the current state of the media in the United States brings to me. I don't know quite why this sadness is so acute except to say that the future of one ideal of existence hangs in the balance. This ideal was clearly in the minds of those who created this country and its demise is clearly in the mind of those who are in control of our country now.

The public owns the airwaves. The corporations merely lease them from the public, and the FCC is supposed to help ensure responsible corporate use of the airwaves.

Already a small handful of media conglomerates is setting the agenda for what is being discussed. Smaller than at any other time in American history, thanks to the Telecommunications Act of 1996. Organizations like Clear Channel and Rupert Murdoch's News Corp have more power in shaping public opinion than anyone else can fight against.

Let's keep the airwaves open to the public the best way we can -- by ensuring a diversity of opinions which can only be possible through a diversity of ownership.

Please take this very seriously. The future of the American democracy is at stake. Don't be forever known as "the man who sold out America" to the interests of a mere few corporations in the history books. Do the right thing!

Rick Snow